

Remarks

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's indication that claims 1-11, 13-27, and 29-31 are directed to allowable subject matter. Additionally, in the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 12 and 28 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Application Publication 2002/0031125 A1 to Sato.

By this Amendment, Applicants have amended claims 13, 16, and 17 to include features previously recited in claim 12 and have amended claim 29 to include features previously recited in claim 28. Claims 12 and 28 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 1-11, 13-27, and 29-31 are now pending.

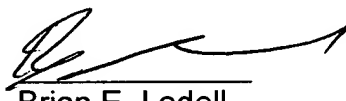
Although Applicants do not agree with the Examiner's rejection based on Sato, in order to expedite prosecution, Applicants have amended the claims so that each of the pending claims is directed to subject matter that the Examiner indicated in the Office Action as being allowable. Accordingly, the rejection based on Sato is traversed.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner's reconsideration of this application, and the timely allowance of the pending claims.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account No. 50-1070 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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